Conference on Disarmament

19 January 2018
English
Original: Spanish

Letter dated 25 September 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Mexico addressed to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament transmitting the declaration of the member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, in its capacity as the coordinator of the work of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) in Geneva, presents its compliments to the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which serves as the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament, and has the honour to refer to the 2018 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

In its capacity as the coordinator of OPANAL, the Permanent Mission of Mexico transmits herewith the declaration of the member States of OPANAL on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (document Inf.18/2017/Rev.5), in both English and Spanish, and requests that the text be registered and circulated as an official document of the 2018 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva takes this opportunity to convey to the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which serves as the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament, the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.

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Annex

[English]

Declaration of the member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September 2017)

The member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL),

Conscious of their historic commitment to comprehensive nuclear disarmament,

Reaffirming that a world without nuclear weapons is essential for the accomplishment of the priority objectives of humanity, those being peace, security and development,

Recognising that to achieve and maintain a world free from nuclear weapons is a responsibility shared by all Member States of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, States must refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, a violation of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law, and constitute a crime against humanity,

Proud to belong to Latin America and the Caribbean, the first densely populated region in the world that, by means of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), established a nuclear-weapon-free zone,

Reiterating the full validity of the declarations on nuclear disarmament adopted by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) on 20 August 2013, in Buenos Aires; on 29 January 2014, in Havana; on 29 January 2015, in Belen; on 27 January 2016, in Quito; and on 25 January 2017, in Punta Cana,

Welcoming the celebration of the half-centennial of the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 14 February 2017 within the framework of the XXV Session of the General Conference of OPANAL, held at the ministerial level,

Recalling the "Declaration of the Member States of OPANAL on the 50th Anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)" adopted on 14 February 2017, in which the Latin American and Caribbean countries renewed their commitment to continue to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Highlighting the importance of the International Seminar "A world free of nuclear weapons: Is it desirable? Is it possible? How could it be achieved?" that took place on 13 February 2017, in Mexico City, as part of the commemorative events for the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, in which took part eminent personalities well-known in the international debate on nuclear weapons,

Aware that the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) are a political, legal and institutional model for the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones,

Reiterating also their conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is closely related to the maintenance of peace and security in the respective regions and that the prohibition of nuclear weapons in different regions, adopted by sovereign decision of the States comprised therein, has a beneficial influence over other regions,

Emphasising their rejection of nuclear weapons, which, after more than 70 years of existence and use, continue to represent a risk to international peace and security as well as an imminent danger of destruction to the planet,

Highlighting the importance of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 5 December 2016: 71/46 "Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons"; 71/47 "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons"; and 71/55 "Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world", which represent important political advances towards the delegitimization of nuclear weapons,

Fully aware of the obligation set forth in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the unequivocal commitment of nuclear weapon States to negotiate effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective control,

Recalling that the prohibition of nuclear weapons is a means to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner within clearly established timeframes and that elimination is the only truly effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons,

The States members of OPANAL,

Join in the commemoration, on 26 September 2017, of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, established by resolution 68/32 (2013) of the United Nations General Assembly;

On this occasion, the member States:

1. *Welcome* the adoption and opening for signature of the "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons" that prohibits the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

2. *Consider* that the conclusion of this Treaty is an important step that complements the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and joins, two decades later, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on the road towards the elimination of those weapons of mass destruction;

3. *Express* their expectation that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, opened for signature on 20 September 2017, may soon enter into force;

4. *Express* their indignation at the existence, as of today, of about 15 thousand nuclear weapons that pose an unacceptable threat to humankind;

5. *Reiterate* their deep concern over the imminent danger posed by the existence of nuclear weapons, a danger that becomes more serious by the day;

6. *Recall* that this concern is reflected in numerous resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, including Res. 1 (I) of 24 January 1946, as well as in the preamble of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean of 1967, and in the preamble of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1968;

7. *Recall also* that the First Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament (SSOD I), in 1978, affirmed in its Final Document [1] that "nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization", and that such situation has not changed;

[1] A/S-10/2.

8. *Reiterate* the commitment of the States of the region endorsed in the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace to continue to promote nuclear disarmament as the priority objective and to contribute to general and complete disarmament in order to favour the strengthening of trust between nations;

9. *Reaffirm* the terms of the Communiqué of OPANAL on the "Nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" (Doc. Inf.19/2017Rev.3)[2] issued on 14 September 2017;

10. *Firmly demand* that nuclear weapons not be used again, under any circumstances by any actor, which can only be assured by the prohibition and the transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination of all nuclear weapons;

11. *Reiterate* the call upon all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their security and defence doctrines and policies and to comply fully with their legal obligations and unequivocal commitments to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay;

12. *Firmly demand* that nuclear-weapon States cease the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and development of new types of these weapons, which is inconsistent with the obligation to adopt effective measures towards nuclear disarmament;

13. *Call upon* all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear weapon test explosions, other nuclear explosions or any other relevant non-explosive experiment, including subcritical experiments for the improvement of nuclear weapons; such actions are contrary to the purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as well as to the spirit of the Treaty, undermining the desired impact as a nuclear disarmament measure;

14. *Urge* the States included in Annex 2 to the CTBT[3] that have not ratified the Treaty, to take the necessary measures to do so as soon as possible;

15. *Reiterate* that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, is vital to the achievement of nuclear disarmament and to international security; and in this regard, *call upon* all States not parties to the Treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States, without further delay and without conditions;

16. *Confirm* the inalienable right of all States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination;

17. *Express* their determination to work for the success of the United Nations high-level conference on nuclear disarmament, convened through resolution 68/32 of the United Nations General Assembly, to be held in 2018; as well as for the success of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT);

18. *Urge* nuclear-weapon States that made interpretative declarations concerning Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco that are contrary to the spirit of the Treaty to review them together with OPANAL with the aim of revising or eliminating them in order to give full and unequivocal security assurances to the States that comprise the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the region;

19. *Consider* that this subject matter interests all nuclear-weapon-free zones;

20. *Underline* the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones as an instrument for nuclear disarmament and, in this regard, *encourage* the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones by means of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned;

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[2] Available on OPANAL website http://bit.ly/2hmxHuz.

[3] The People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United States of America, the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the State of Israel, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

21. *Regret* the two-decade failure to comply with the resolution on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, an integral part of the commitments of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and of the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

22. *Reiterate* their commitment to continue to promote the dialogue among Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones through, inter alia, the convening of a fourth conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties establishing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, within the framework of the United Nations;

23. *Reiterate* also their conviction that information concerning the danger posed by nuclear weapons is essential so that public opinion, youth and non-governmental organizations may join the efforts for the elimination of nuclear weapons;

24. *Undertake* to continue to work for the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education programmes, convinced that they are an effective means for contributing to the consolidation of international peace and security.